

(1)

THE KARENS OF BURMA

I

BACKGROUND

101
175

THE Karen people of Burma are now the second most important tribe in the country ; but one hundred years ago they were called by their more powerful Burman neighbours the "Wild Cattle of the Hills".

At that time they were unorganized and lived in the dense forests that covered the country, especially in the ranges of hills that afforded them protection. They had no written language and were held in bondage to the fears that made their lives stagnant and prevented their changing the customs that they had received from their ancestors.

181
131
● 361
563
186

They were not an aggressive people and sought security in withdrawal from the rivers, which in those days were the only lines of communication, and they built their small villages high up in the hills or other places difficult of access. Here they lived in poverty but not without hope that some day their descendants would have better times. But now like hunted birds they admonished their children as they squatted at their rude low tables to eat their rice, "Eat fast, eat fast. The Burmans may come !"

173
171

Their origin is obscure. They have no written records and the destructive wet climate has obliterated almost all

DISTRIBUTION

3

There are a few Karens in the ranges of hills as far north as a line running through Thayetmyo and Pyinmana. To the east, Loikaw is a Karen district and Karens are found farther eastward in Thailand. For the most part the Karens share their localities with the Burmans and Shans. Their villages are now found scattered over the plains as well as the hills in Lower Burma all the way from Pyinmana to Victoria Point and from Arakan to some indefinite line in Thailand. It has been reported that there are a few scattered Karen communities even as far east as Cambodia, but they have been pretty well absorbed by the more aggressive surrounding races.

During the unsettled Burmese times they clung to the hills and the remote forests for their security and wrested a precarious living there, but with the more peaceful conditions brought about by the settled British Government they spilled over into the plains and, clearing tracts of forest for villages and tracts for paddy fields, they settled down and became prosperous. Therefore they may now be found in every district of Lower Burma. In such sections as around Bassein, Pyapon, Pegu, Thaton, Moulmein, and Tavoy they comprise a very considerable minority of the population.

In the hills the Karen villages are usually at the top of a ridge. The houses are close together and in some places they are surrounded by a stockade of bamboo with sharp pickets pointing outward to reinforce the fence. There are seldom more than twenty to thirty houses in a village.

When they build on the plains they usually select a site away from the roads where they will attract least attention and be free from intrusion. Often in the villages there is little attempt at orderly arrangement of the houses.

DISTRIBUTION

5

- 361 One may front against the back of the next. Here the individuality of the Karens is made manifest.

178
463

Originally they were, almost without exception, agriculturists and therefore kept to the outlying districts. Their villages were small for they did not have the power to organize a large society. But later, as they began to grow more prosperous and some of them became well-to-do landowners, they moved into the towns. With the spread of education they took up such posts in the cities as teachers, clerks, policemen, and officers and men in the Burma Army, and in a few instances as traders. Therefore in the vicinity of each of the larger towns and cities of Burma there was, at the time of the invasion, a community of Karens usually living in a section by themselves, for they are gregarious. In Rangoon, however, many Karens were to be found renting apartments and living among other peoples in the city, and men and women were to be found in small numbers everywhere.

369

III

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

144

In appearance the Karens are not very different from the other Mongoloid peoples in Burma. - Their usual colour is a little lighter than the 'Burmans', and is that of coffee with a generous mixture of milk. Their faces are a little flatter than the 'Burmans'. Having lived mostly in the hills they have a more stocky body and thicker thighs and calves than those of their neighbours. In height they are short, the men averaging a little over five feet, and the women a little less.

Young people of both sexes are attractive and robust,

MEASURES OF TIME AND SPACE

55

361 ●



THE GATEWAY OF A VILLAGE STOCKADE

This is a protection not only against bad characters, but also against wild animals.

CHAPTER VIII

THE KAREN VILLAGE-HOUSE

361
[177]
342 The Karen on the plains live in houses of Burmese construction, which are therefore outside the scope of this work. In the Pegu Hills we find the single-structure village, which seems to have been the characteristic Karen dwelling from early times. It might be described as a bamboo apartment-house on stilts, accommodating on the average from twenty to thirty families. It is spread out on one floor, and each family occupies not one "flat" but a room, called in Karen "deu," which faces a central corridor running the length of the barrack.

[78] Such a village, "th' waw," is usually rebuilt on a new site each year. The new location is sought by the local chief during the hot season, after conference with the elders and after the crops have been brought in. The place selected by the chief is fairly level, adjacent to the area to be cut over the coming year, and near a spring or stream that will not dry up during the hot weather. In the old days it was also necessary to choose a site that would be high and easily defended against raids. Before the decision is finally made, the chief must consult the auspices in the form of chicken bones, and if these are propitious and no laughing-bird (*Lanius*) calls "chet, chet," the men begin to cut bamboos with which to construct the village.

342
313 The bamboos selected for posts are twenty or more feet long and usually from four to six inches in diameter. They are set in the ground at intervals of four or five cubits (six to seven and a half feet). Holes are chopped through these large uprights at a height of from six to eight feet above the ground, and pins are thrust through on which bamboo girders of the same size are fastened by means of withes. At right angles to these girders and resting on them, other bamboo poles, slightly smaller in size, are tied at regular intervals of about a cubit to form the floor joists. The floor is made of large bamboos, split, flattened out, and secured to the joists by means of withes of the same material. It is six or eight feet above the ground, springy, and seamed with cracks through which rubbish and wash water may be disposed of. As

THE KAREN VILLAGE-HOUSE

57

342



PART OF A MOUNTAIN KAREN VILLAGE, THABRAWAST DISTRICT

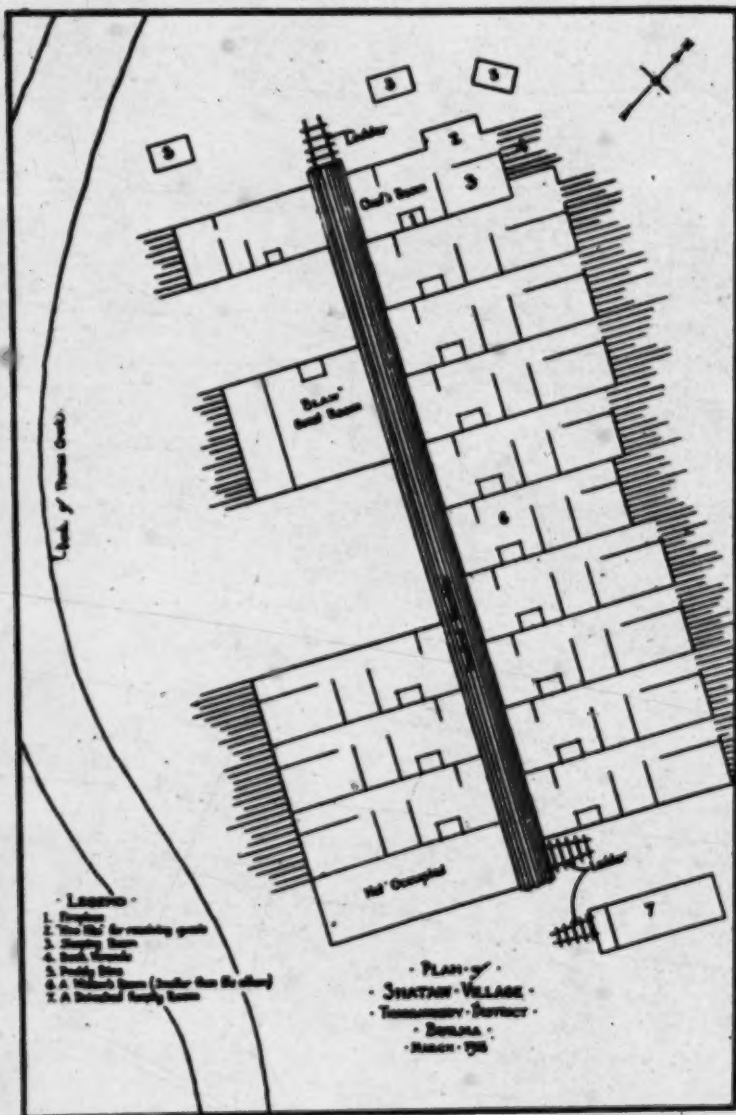


361●

DOORWAY AND GATEWAY OF THE VILLAGE, IN THE THABRAWAST DISTRICT

THE KAREN VILLAGE-HOUSE

59



342
361 ●

342

tains numerous cracks and apertures, and may be easily removed to allow a corpse to be carried out. Similar partitions divide the sleeping apartment from the rest of the family-room. (See p. 65.)

●364

342

When we come upon such a village, we may find it surrounded by a stockade, as in the case of those in the Tharrawaddy district, where protection is thus obtained from tigers and other animals of the jungle and also from human prowlers. The stockade is made of bamboo poles, re-inforced by four rows of sharp pickets woven in and out of the fence. (See pp. 55, 57.) The gate of the stockade is constructed of large bamboos suspended from a cross-piece, so that they knock against one another when any one enters. Thus, the approach of a visitor is well announced. Once inside of the enclosure and past the multitude of yelping dogs which the villagers keep, the visitor comes to the ladder by which access is gained to the communal abode. The ladder, like everything else, is made of bamboo and has small loose rungs that can be easily removed. To an American it looks inverted, for it is narrow at the bottom and wide at the top. If the sun is high, heat is reflected from the burn-

[331]

342

352

354

415

ing hot bamboos. Mounting to the floor, one steps gingerly along, fearing the round flooring may turn under him. The hollow bamboos resound, as each rubs and creaks against its fellows. The whole population seems to be peering out of their doors or peeping through the cracks. The visitor enters a doorway, without its door. The first thing in the room that strikes his attention is the fireplace ("hpa k' pu"), which is only a little way from the entrance. The intervening space is largely filled with water-joints, rice baskets, and various household utensils. This is called the water-joint place ("hti pu law"). The fireplace consists of four upright bamboos fastened in the floor beams below and reaching to the cross-beams above. On the floor a rough box-like enclosure is built around the bottoms of the poles and filled in with dirt and ashes. Three round stones, or more in case the family has two pots boiling at once, give support to the cooking vessels, while the fire underneath is fed with dry bamboo fuel. About three feet above the ashes there is a shelf made of bamboo splints with their hard surfaces downward to the fire. The soot deposit on the under side of this shelf prevents the flames from doing any damage. Pots, plates, and other utensils find their convenient resting-place upon the shelf. One or two other shelves above this serve as catch-alls for herbs, baskets, tin lamps, unused food, large knives ("dahs"), and almost anything else that finds its way into the house. A hole cut in each

THE KAREN VILLAGE-HOUSE

63

way of building, and every stage of evolution from the village-bar-rack to separate family houses may be observed in Karen villages to-day. (See the illustrations on pages 94, 220, and 227.)

When an epidemic breaks out in a bamboo village-house, the inhabitants are not held there by the considerations that ordinarily prevent the dwellers in durable towns and cities from taking their prompt departure. At best the Karen village-house is habitable only for a year or two, was built by the combined efforts of the men of the little community from material of which the supply is abundant, and can be replaced quickly. When, therefore, disease begins to spread among the adjacent families, they scatter to the four winds with their most necessary belongings. Soon they gather and build another village on a new site and, having removed the last of their possessions from the old infected structure, leave it to decay or set it on fire.

When a village community is removing from one site to another, the women prepare food and liquor for the journey, pack up their belongings and leave them in the jungle near the path, if they do not wish to take them to the new place at once, and, finally, prepare the offerings to be left behind. These offerings consist of four balls of cooked rice, one white, another made black by being mixed with charcoal, and the other two colored red and yellow, respectively, by the admixture of colored pigments. These balls are placed on a large winnowing-sieve that has been woven by the women for the purpose at the very last. This tray and its offerings are carried to the central part of the house, where it is visited and spat upon by every member of the village. They then repeat the following lines:

"Let all sickness and pain depart. Depart all colds.
Go eat your black rice, your red rice.
Go eat your betel and its leaves.
Go eat with your wife and your children.
Go stay in your house."

After thus addressing the spirits, the villagers take up their burdens, beat their drums and gongs, and set out for their new abode—a sight, indeed, for a motion picture camera.

On arriving at the new house, they do not enter it at once, but wait until some one has plucked from adjacent trees seven twigs growing upright, and with these has swept out the rooms. As the sweeper goes through the house he repeats the following incantation:

342
177

361
731

361
782

[539]

342
782

THE KAREN PEOPLE OF BURMA

243

[361]
787
423

When a crop has been harvested, the village chief and elders choose the ground to be cut over the following year. Each village has its well-recognized farming areas, beyond which are the lands of the neighboring village. Each member of the community then picks out his particular plot for cultivating, takes home a lump of the earth, puts it under his pillow, and sleeps on it. If he has an auspicious dream, he consults the chicken bones for a confirmation of the good omen. Securing this confirmation, he regards his choice as fixed. Otherwise, he selects another plot and repeats the ceremonies. Once his selection is approved by the auspices, the spot is called a "du la," and he clears a little space on the land, after which he addresses the spirits as follows:

[539]

"Depart all you evil spirits ('ta we ta na').
We are going to work here for our food,
To get sustenance for our wife and children.
Let no sickness come upon us.
We are going to work until it is finished."

Next he places a lump of soil on the clearing and, having wrapped the chicken bones in the leaf of a creeper ("ki ku"), he touches the lump with them, raises them towards the sky, and again touches or strikes the clod with the mystic bones. He now breaks these apart and scrapes them until he can insert splints of bamboo into the holes of the bones. If this act of divination is also successful, he is ready for work.

241

243

In the early days, when much of the primeval forest was still standing, the Karen would clear out the brush and bamboos from among the giant trees on the hillside they were preparing to cultivate. Then they raised platforms at the foot of the trees from which they could cut them above the broad-spreading buttresses, at their base, leaving enough of the trunk intact to keep them from falling. When the whole hillside tract had been cut over in this manner, they felled the uppermost tree so as to crash down on those just below, and these in turn would bring down others until

officers, who should become familiar with the Karen people and language, should develop a plan in accordance with which these tribes might be given reservations of land in exchange for the valuable areas now under their control. These reservations might be either in the hills or on the plains, but the Karens should be taught to cultivate them according to approved methods, in order to gain an ample livelihood. Old racial animosities and the temptation for one people to exploit another militate against entrusting such a policy to Burman officials. It ought to be placed only in the hands of earnest, straightforward Government officials, who have gained the confidence of the Karen and are able to deal with them sympathetically but firmly. This general program would doubtless involve some outlay in supplying cattle, not to speak of competent instruction in modern agricultural methods, animal husbandry, etc.

CHAPTER XIV

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

POLITICAL ARRANGEMENTS

The Karen race does not possess what may be termed social solidarity. It is broken up into many tribes, some of which differ considerably from others, as, for instance, the Brechs of Karenni and the Sgaw Karen of Lower Burma. There is, however, enough similarity of dialects and traditions, as well as of religion and customs, to make it certain that they really belong together and are descended from a common ancestry. Even the individual tribes do not consist of compact groups of clans. To be sure, there is more cohesion among the members of one tribe than among those of different tribes; but the village rather than the tribe has the greater claim upon their adherence. In the days before the British conquest and annexation of Burma—when the country received a stable government that put an end to feuds and petty warfare—the village was the political unit. In the village the houses were ranged side by side, or else, as in the Pegu Hills, all the families of the little community lived within what may be called the village-house, each family having its living-room opening off of the common corridor. Everybody was thrown into intimate contact with everybody else in the village. Politically and socially the village was the center of their common life. The family group, the natural unit of kinship, although not always confined to the village, was economically and politically subordinate to it. 619
(21
175
361

In the village the elders ("phga tha phga," literally, the old men) were looked up to as connecting the village life with the past, 898

¹ The British conquest of Burma was accomplished in three wars, each of which was brought on by the arrogance and stupidity of the Burmese kings and their high-handed dealings with British subjects. The First Burmese War (1824-26) resulted in the ceding of the provinces of Tenasserim and Arakan to the British, in the former of which there was a considerable Karen population. The Second Burmese War (1852-53) ended with the annexation of the country of Pegu or Lower Burma, in which dwell the great body of the Karen people in Burma; and the remainder of the territory ruled by the despotic Burmese kings came to enjoy the privileges of the Indian Empire after a single short campaign of only two months' duration in 1885, known as the Third Burmese War. Soon after this an orderly government was established throughout what is now known as the province of Burma: Sir J. G. Scott, *Burma, A Handbook*, 190-204. 000

239

THE KAREN PEOPLE OF BURMA

342



A KIL VILLAGE IN TRANSITION

The family rooms have become separate buildings, each with its own ladder.

361



A KAREN VILLAGE ON THE PLAINS

The Karen do not set their houses in an orderly arrangement, but each man builds where he likes within the village plot. The taller trees are coconut-palms, the others are "toddy-palms." Notice the pots put up to catch the sap from which the toddy is made.

SUPERNATURAL AND MYTHICAL BEINGS

227

offerings are made to her, and the rim of earth that encircles the entrance to crabs' burrows is placed on top of the paddy pile and in the bin in her honor.¹

"Hkū Te" is the lord of the region of death, the king of hades. His origin is explained as follows: A couple dwelling in the spirit

776

773

775

776



[361]

A BURE KAREN CHRISTIAN VILLAGE, TOUNGOO DISTRICT
The Karen still love to build their houses as close together as possible.

realm once plotted to slay and devour their son-in-law. Accordingly, they turned themselves into giant winding creepers hanging across the road by which their intended victim was returning from his field, carrying a basket of paddy. Instead of attempting to pass under the vines, as he was expected to do, the son-in-law severed them with his sickle. One of the creepers, the wife, immediately flew upward to the sky and became a rainbow, while the other penetrated the earth, resumed his original form as a man, and became king of hades. There he receives the souls of mortals and rules over the dead. As judge of those under his authority he grants permission to the ones that have lived worthily to enter the higher realms, but he condemns to the lowest hell those of base lives. No offerings are made to this Karen Pluto.

¹ See *ibid.*, p. 62. An account of the ceremonies performed in connection with the cultivation of paddy occupies pp. 64-68. The myth concerning "Hpi Bi Yaw" resembles more or less that of the Irish and Scotch corn maidens, Korraby, and suggests that of the Roman Corn and the Greek Demeter; see J. G. Frazer, "The Spirits of the Corn and of the Wild," in *The Golden Bough*, Vols. VII and VIII.

KARÉNS

147



331. KAREN VILLAGE.

in small numbers, chiefly as pilgrims to the Buddhist shrines, of which the chief is the Shwe Dagon, in Rangoon (p. 188).

The Karéns are the most important hill-race of the country, and best exemplify the mode of life of the quasi-aboriginal tribes, whom Burmans, Taláings, and Shans have kept out of the plain-land. The "white Karéns," Sghaw (*Sghraw*) and Pwo, occupy the mountains between Burma and Siam. They have colonies in mountains far to the east and west, and have also spread into the plains adjoining. They call themselves *Baganyéw* (*Bghraganyéw*), and call the Burmans *Bayéw*. The Burmans call them *Kayín*, and familiarly *Tha-ngè-dyín*—play-mate, in much the same way as we say "Jack Burman" and "John Chinaman." The Karéns get their living by making hill-forest

K
241
K
177
K
[854]
K
181

clearings (*laungya*), on which they raise one crop, and remove to fresh sites every season. On the fringe of the mountain tracts the Karéns are more or less Burmanized, and practise Buddhism, being attracted by the prestige of the religion, with its great festivals in which everyone is free to share—especially now that they can mingle in the towns without fear of their quondam oppressors. The barbarous *Mgwin*, which the Burmans themselves are beginning to disuse, is one of the first marks of the contact of the Karén with the dominant race. The Karéns settled in the lowlands are known as Taláing-Kayín, and Bamá-Kayín. The men know Burmese, and dress like Burmans. The Karén is noted for truthfulness and chastity. The former characteristic is probably to be accounted for by absence of coercive régime, their society being, as Macpherson says of the Khonds, pervaded by



332. KAREN MOTHER AND BARE.

KARÉNS

149



336. KARENS SOWING THEIR CROPS.

The primitive Karéns in the remote hills build one or more huge bamboo barracks, partitioned off for the different families. Those more in contact with civilization build separate huts. When the new settlement is complete, the Karéns, both men and women, carouse. From February to April each household is hard at

241
work clearing its cultivation-plot of four to eight acres of forest on the hill-side. Bamboo forest is preferred; occasional trees of large size are killed by ringing, or are lopped to get rid of their shade; many trees are felled (No. 105). The lumber is left to dry for burning, till the rain clouds begin to gather. Sometimes an unexpected break of the monsoon prevents the burning and renders the whole labour futile. After the first burn, the residuc is stacked against the standing trees and burned again. When the rains have set in, the seed is sown. A man goes in advance and makes rows of shallow holes with a hoe mounted on a long and tapering bamboo staff; the free or wide end is furnished with openings in the side, which cause the bamboo to emit a musical note at each stroke. Women with seed-bags follow; they put in the rice and the secondary crops (*linan*, cotton, and, in a few localities, teak-seed for the government, No. 244), in alternate rows, and close the soil. Watchers' huts are built, and the birds scared till the seed has sprouted.

From that time till the crop is thick, it has to be assiduously weeded. If the cultivator falls sick for a fortnight the weeds gain ground, and he cannot come up with the work again. The clearings have to be fenced to protect them against deer and pigs, and the rats have to be kept down by lines of traps which often extend for miles. In years of bamboo seeding (p. 112) the rats multiply to



337. KAREN CROP-WATCHER'S HUT.

31: Scherman--30 E-4 (no date) 1915 AP1 Burma

101
[797] Many of them [i.e. Karen, Andamans] have Karen AP7
embraced Buddhism and more especially Christian-
ity. The American Baptist Mission has been most
successful among them and draws trainees for the
missionary and teaching profession from the
Karen. In the distant hill districts the tribes
can still be found in their original civiliza-
[342] tion. There they still build their crude bamboo
huts, often one for several families (21). The

21. Ferrars, ibid., p. 149.

Karenni (meaning red Karen) who live beyond the
British administration zone, but still under
British control, live together with a few kindred
tribes in a separate little state in the southeast
corner of the Southern Shan States--1911:

19,008. They are, without question, least
touched by civilization. Christianity has won

[771] over only a few converts among them; the demon
cult is still the predominant religion. The tall

• 361 masts, which are erected at sowing and harvesting

[782] time as sacrificial posts for the spirits, indi-
cate from afar the proximity of a Karenni vill-
age. A sturdy fence of bamboo wickerwork usually

encloses the village itself, and most of the time
/Figure 6--Interior of a Taungyo house in Myinka,
near Kalaw./ the individual houses are also

343 fenced in (Plate VII, 1). The grain sheds, which
are small pile structures, stand some distance

away, usually outside the village fence because
of fire hazard. This is a custom which can be
observed among all Indochinese mountain tribes.

This practice is all the more surprising since in
the days when raids, robberies, and tribal feuds
were very frequent just the most valuable posses-
sions were kept outside the fort-like village
enclosures. The grain sheds were secured only

by a wooden bar and were accessible to everybody;
it was even customary to keep also other valuable

343 possessions in these huts. However, the grain shed

778 seems to have been revered as holy; it is said that

31: Scherman--78 E-4 (no date) 1915 AP1 Burma
 Plate VI

Shan AP11
 Sino-Tibetan Rocks AE
 Karen AP7
 Palaung AP10

1.

2.

^S
 342 Namhkam, quarter of the
 361 Chinese Shan, Mixed
 style.

House of the Chinese Sha
 in Wettaung, near Bhamo,
 upper Burma.

3.

4.

^{Si}
 342 Intha houses, Inle Lake,
 southern Shan State of
 Yawnghwe.

Lisu house in Pangsayyi,
 northern Shan State of
 Tawngpeng.

Plate VII

1.

2.

^K
 342 Karenni village of
 361 Ngwedaung, Karenni
 419 States.

Karenni house in Kwen-
 long, near Pekon southern
 Shan State of Mongpai
 (Burmese: Moby).

3.

4.

^P
 342 Padaung house in
 Naungswe, about 8
 kilometers from Mong-
 pai, the main town of
 the Shan State of the
 same name.

Gaungto-Karen house in
 Takedu (shan Yanghota,
 Burmese: Tarudaw), sou-
 thern Shan State of Mong-
 pai (Burmese: Moby).

Plate VIII

1.

2.

^P
 342 Palaung village in
 Namhsan, northern Shan
 State of Tawngpeng.

Palaung house in Saraw,
 near Namhsan.

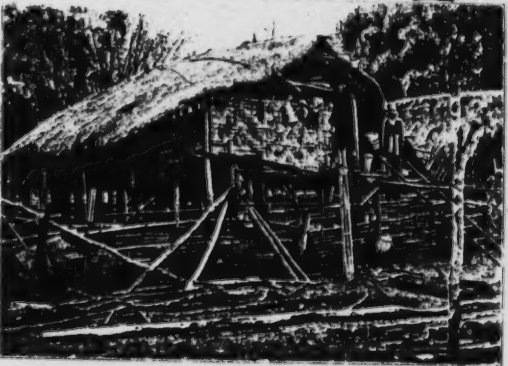
31. Scherman--83 E-4 (no date) 1915

API Burma

Karen AP7

Palaung AP10

K
342
[417]



2



4

K
342
361
417



P
342



3

Plate VII
[For description see page 78, category 116. Analysis]

for such a fairly long period, it was decided to give up the idea of continuing our survey of the Little Andaman that year. A 122

At the suggestion of Mr Majid it was finally decided instead to pay a visit to the surviving members of the Friendly Andamanese tribes at Neil and Havelock Islands where they had now been transferred and settled. Unfortunately, as it was March and the closing month of the financial year, I had to return to my headquarters at Banaras and leave Mr Sarkar in charge of the party to carry on further surveys in the North and Middle Andamans as far as this was found possible. A 121 [131]

Accordingly Mr Sarkar with his party left Port Blair on 6-3-48 on the Forest Motor Launch "Lindsay" and arrived at Long Island at about 8 A.M. on the following day. Mr Sarkar was met by Mr Joseph, T. S. D. O. who brought "Loka" and his party of four Andamanese. They were studied by him. The party left Long Island on the Forest Launch "Kokhari" at about 7-30 A.M. on the following day. Mr Joseph accompanied the party, who halted at the Guitar Island where some of Loka's associates were hunting turtles with harpoons. After leaving Guitar Island, the launch passed through Homfray Strait. Mr Joseph showed the spot where the Jarawas in 1925 attacked his camp. This is near the place from where the Jarawas usually crossed from the Baratang Island to the Middle Andamans. Proceeding further westwards, Mr Sarkar and his party reached the north-east end of the Spike Island. This is another route of migration of the Jarawas from the South to North Andamans. Usually they come from the South Andaman and cross over to Bluff Island and then reach the Spike Island opposite to it. Loka gave the information that it was about this place that several Jarawas were shot sometime back and their bodies were buried in the Bluff Island. The party went along the coast of Neil Island and anchored off Foul Bay. Human footprints identified by Mr Joseph and Loka as belonging to the Jarawas were found in the sand. Following the footprints the party found the remnants of burnt ashes and cinder in a spot in the jungle. There were also vessels made of leaves for carrying water which were still wet. These were collected as specimens of Jarawa objects for the Department's collections. No traces of Jarawas themselves could however be found who must have moved into the jungles just prior to our party's visit. Our men then crossed over to Bluff Island and searched for the Jarawa skeletons, but none were found. On the 9th of March the "Kokhari" returned to Long Island, where it anchored. Loka brought his party of 21 individuals who were now settled in Neil Island. These people were carefully studied by Mr Sarkar and notes taken regarding their geneology, family structure and physical state, etc. On the 9th the Deputy Chief Commissioner, Mr S. C. Gupta with his wife arrived at Long Island. Mr Sarkar and his party accompanied him to Stewart Sound in his boat "Elsa". Unfortunately the few Andamanese who were living there happened to have gone out in their canoes for fishing and could not be contacted (see Plate I, Fig. 5). A 115 A 114 [225] [411] A [115] [126] A [115]

They then went with Mr Gupta to the Karen village called Webi situated at a short distance from Stewart Sound. There were no Andamanese there. K 361

6

301
103
114
501
342
383
411
531

There were no Andamanese there but 400 people consisting of 133 males and 130 females who migrated from Bassein in 1924. They were Karen Christians who had settled there. After returning to Long Island on the 12th, Mr Sarkar and party left in the motor boat "Return" for a short cruise along the Jarawa country. Besides Mr Joseph, there were Mr Pooviah and a few of his Burman Bush Police armed with rifles and guns. The party passed through the Homfray's Strait and anchored at the north eastern corner of the Spike Island. Loka and his party of three Andamanese accompanied them in their two canoes. They came to the shore in one of the Andamanese canoes and after entering the forest they found bundles of bamboos piled up at one corner. This was identified as a Jarawa raft. There were also three paddles made out of a palm tree. These specimens were procured for the Department. After proceeding some distance in the jungle, 19 small fire places were counted in scattered manner. A temporary hut was also noticed at a short distance. A number of objects usually used by the Andamanese tribes for household purposes was found including a sling for carrying babies. A beautiful specimen of a Jarawa Bow painted in red in geometrical designs was also found. Photographs were taken of the settlements of the Jarawa camp and objects collected for the Museum. In another place at Yeratiagig remnants of a Jarawa camp including pottery and bones of animals, etc., were found. The party returned to Long Island on 14-3-48 and examined 8 of the remaining members of Loka's party. It left the same day for Port Blair where it arrived at 10 P.M. On the 25th Mr Sarkar and his party with the Deputy Chief Commissioner Mr Gupta, left for Kar Nicobar where it arrived on the following day. It returned to Port Blair after staying for a few days. During this time in Kar Nicobar, besides studying the Nicobarese of the Island Mr Sarkar met two Jarawa children who were captured and brought over there and placed in a local Mission School for education.

A
341
342
352
353
162
125

In the following year in January 1949, another small party was sent under Dr A. K. Mitra with Messrs H. K. Bose and A. Bhattacharyya, to continue the survey of the Little Andaman further along the eastern coast. They visited Hut Bay on the 28th and went to the Onge settlement there. A large circular hut similar to that seen by us at Tambobui was observed. It contained nine cots with a fire place in the centre. There were also two outrigger canoes, one in front of the hut and another on the beach. Altogether 11 Onges were found consisting of 2 adult males, 6 females and 3 young children between the ages of 6 to 15. The 8 adults and the adolescent boys were carefully measured and observations noted about their special somatic characters. After leaving Hut Bay they went as far as the South Point which is the southernmost point on the eastern coast of the Little Andaman, but did not see any other Onge settlement. They had to return on the 31st as the launch could not be spared any further.

142
164
A
142

The Onges were found to be strong and healthy and free from venereal disease, a scourge, which along with tuberculosis were chiefly responsible for the rapid depopulation of the Andamanese tribes. Our observations agree with the accounts of the Negritos of the Andaman Islands published before